

NH CHARTER SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Quarterly Meeting

September 13, 2011

MEETING MINUTES

The quarterly meeting of the Charter School Advisory Committee was called to order by Roberta Tenney on September 13, 2011 in the Board Room at the Department of Education, 101 Pleasant Street Concord, New Hampshire.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Roberta Tenney, Christine Barry, Judith Fillion, Pamela Burke, Karen Geary, Kathy Lassey, Lisa Lavoie, and Marcia McCaffrey.

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Calhoun, Ted Comstock, Deb Connell, Lisa Danley, Beth McClure, John Davis, and Todd DeMitchell.

NHDOE STAFF AND GUESTS: Joe Miller, newly appointed Director of the Division of Instruction; Michelle Gauthier and Gail Taylor (CSO)

CHECK-IN:

Discussion took place on current committee membership:

- A new Committee Chair needs to be identified – Chair nominations are welcome and will be revisited at the next meeting.
- Todd DeMitchell informed the Charter School Office that he would not be able to serve on the Committee this year. A postsecondary replacement will be needed.
- John Davis and John Calhoun – should they be removed from the committee? Will Joe Miller take former Division Director Kathleen Murphy's place on the committee?

APPROVAL OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOLS:

Michelle Gauthier discussed four new Charter Schools that have been recently approved by the State Board of Education:

- ***PACE Career Academy*** is our first locally authorized (SAU #53 - Pembroke) charter school located in Suncook. PACE will open to students on September 19, 2011 and will service students in grades 9-12.
- ***Making Community Connections (MC²)*** is looking at multiple locations in Newport and Manchester. This Charter is based on the original MC² (Monadnock Community Connections School) and will start with grades 9-12 in Manchester with future plans to add additional grade levels. MC² plans to open in the fall of 2012. Roberta Tenney noted that there are local community concerns with a potential Charter School (5-8) opening in Newport.

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- **Mill Falls Charter School** is our first Montessori Charter School beginning with grades 1-3, and by year four, plans to offer a full elementary program for children grades K-6. Mill Falls is looking in the Manchester area and plans to open in the fall of 2012.
- **TEAMS Charter School** will offer college prep courses with a focus on Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Science. The school will open to students in grades 9-12 and plans to open in the fall of 2012 in Penacook.

CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWALS

Roberta Tenney spoke about the upcoming charter renewals for Virtual Learning Academy, Academy for Science and Design and CSI (Competencies, Skills, and Interests) Charter Schools. Because VLACS and ASD have unique learning environments their renewals will be more complex and will require a special type of evaluation team. Michelle Gauthier will develop a protocol for the renewal process and present a draft at a future meeting.

The Charter School Office is in need of external readers/reviewers for initial charter school applications and start-up grant applications; Kathy Lassey offered her services.

CHARTER SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND LOTTERY PRACTICES

Michelle Gauthier passed out a draft admissions protocol. Discussion took place on the following:

- There was a lengthy discussion on how the lottery process works. The Academy of Science and Design Charter School had an issue with their admissions/lottery process this past spring. The Department of Education met with ASD leadership to discuss an action plan for the future.
- How does admission testing differ from acceptable criteria required as depicted in the Charter's mission statement?
- Each Charter School handles the "wait list" differently – should there be a standard policy on how the "wait list" should be handled (roll-over from year to year, new waiting list each year)?

The Charter School Office will get feedback from the Charter Leaders on the draft admissions protocol and will report back at the next Advisory Committee meeting.

Pam Burke, Board Chair, CSI Charter School spoke about how the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) provides accreditation services for pre-K through postsecondary schools. The NEASC has guidelines for charter schools to include:

- Must be in operation for at least five (5) years
- One group of standards for all grades

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NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Michelle Gauthier provided an updated overview of proposed charter school applications. Applications include: Polaris Charter School, Robert Frost Charter School, The Birches Academy of Academics and Art, and NH Online Charter School.

DISSEMINATION GRANTS Roberta Tenney

Grant awards have been given to: Academy for Science and Design, Strong Foundations, Surry Village and Seacoast Charter Schools. It was asked that more in-depth information on these dissemination awards be presented at the next meeting.

MINUTES: May 10, 2011 Quarterly Meeting

A motion was made by Pam Burke, seconded by Kathy Lassey, to accept the minutes of the May 10, 2011 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Submitted by,

Gail J. Taylor
NH Department of Education
Office of Accountability

Handouts:

- Overview of Proposed Charter School Applications
- Admissions Lottery Guidelines